

✓ P L A N
O F A
General Lying-in Hospital,
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E D I N B U R G H ;
S U B M I T T E D T O T H E P U B L I C
B Y T H E
*P R O F E S S O R O F M I D W I F E R Y I N T H E
U N I V E R S I T Y .*

WOMEN, though in the most affluent circumstances, and under the care of the most eminent practitioners, always look forward to the time of child-bearing with much anxiety and apprehension. Experience has taught them, that many dangers attend that state, even in the healthiest constitutions ; hence they must naturally be impressed with the greatest dread at that critical period.

I F women, who enjoy every advantage which easy circumstances and proper assistance

assistance can bestow, are often unavoidably exposed to many hazards during parturition, the situation of those who are deprived of such blessings, at a season which so peculiarly requires them, must be highly unfortunate.

Those who are engaged in the practice of midwifery, have often occasion to see large families of children suddenly deprived of a mother, by whose vigilant care they were accustomed to be protected from those accidents to which infancy is exposed, by the want of that management during child-bearing, which opulence can procure.

It is well known also, that women in low life are subject to disorders in consequence of improper treatment during the critical season of lying-in, which render the latter years of their existence miserable, and which frequently prevent them from making those exertions on which their own sustenance, as well as that of their family, may depend.

In every civilized country in Europe, public institutions have been established for preserving

preserving lives to the community, which would otherwise be lost from the want of proper assistance under the various diseases to which the human body is liable.

A PROPER provision has not yet been made in Scotland for the very helpless situation of poor pregnant women. But all over the Continent, Lying-in Hospitals are erected in every large city; in London there are several, and in Dublin, and some of the counties of England, such charitable establishments have also been lately founded.

THE Managers of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, ~~have~~ allotted for many years, a ward for pregnant women; but the number of patients having been restricted to *six*, their humane intentions ~~have been~~ beneficial in a partial degree only; *and from the state of their funds they have lately been obliged to shut up the Lying-in Ward entirely.* *were*

THE encrease of workmen in Edinburgh has been very great within these few years, while at the same time, the ordinary wages of labour are so low, that in general, a labouring man cannot by his own industry alone,

alone, support a family of children. The assistance of his wife's work, therefore, is necessary for this purpose; hence, during lying-in, the funds of the family are lessened, while the necessary expences are encreased; consequently the unhappy mother must either be deprived of that care, which is absolutely essential to her recovery, (if she has^{ed} escaped the dangers of child-bearing) or a debt must be incurred, which may prove the source of much distress.

THE Professor of Midwifery in the University of Edinburgh, has always endeavoured, as far as in his power, to assist women in such situations, and he has often enjoyed that pleasing satisfaction which attends successful exertions of humanity.

BUT the field being too extensive for any individual, the late celebrated Dr Young published a memorial in the year 1781, requesting public assistance for the establishment of a General Lying-in Hospital in Edinburgh.

IN the year 1783, a second memorial, on the same subject, was published by him and
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his colleague, the present Professor ; but the unexpected death of Dr Young interrupted for the time the exertions necessary for exciting public attention.

SINCE that time many very melancholy cases have proved to the Professor of Midwifery, the great necessity for such an institution in Edinburgh.

CONVINCED, therefore, that the inhabitants of Scotland cannot be destitute of those feelings which have occasioned the establishment of Lying-in Hospitals in every other civilized country, he takes the liberty to propose the following plan, for a similar charitable institution in Edinburgh, and to solicit public aid for that important purpose.

Plan of a General Lying-in Hospital.

A PROPER building, erected in an airy healthy situation, capable of containing twenty-five patients, with every necessary accommodation, will probably be sufficient at first for a Lying-in Hospital. It should, however,
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be constructed in such a manner, that it may be enlarged when the funds can afford it.

BESIDES lodging for the patients and servants, a room will be required for the meetings of the directors, and another for receiving women who wish for advice as out-patients.

THE management of this charity shall be vested in a President, four Vice-Presidents, eight Ordinary and twelve Extraordinary Directors. The cash, accompts, &c. shall be under the care of a Treasurer.

THE care of the patients shall be committed to the Professor of Midwifery, assisted by the President of the Royal College of Physicians; the Professors of Anatomy and of the Practice of Physic of Edinburgh, as consulting physicians, and the President of the Royal College of Surgeons, as consulting surgeon.

THE servants of the Hospital shall consist of an experienced Midwife, a Cook, two Nurses, and a Porter who shall not reside in the house.

Regulations

Regulations respecting Patients.

THE number of patients shall at first be restricted to twenty-five, subject to such future regulations as the Managers shall from time to time find expedient.

TWELVE women shall be lodged in one ward, to be delivered under the superintendence of the Professor of Midwifery, aided by such male proficient in the practice of that art as he can confidently trust.

SIX women shall be lodged in a ward perfectly distinct from the former, and entering by a different passage. These shall be delivered by female practitioners of midwifery, of approved experience, under the tuition of the Professor.

PROPER rooms shall be allotted for the reception of seven women, whose situation requires concealment from the world. These shall be attended by the Professor and midwife of the house only, and shall never be
seen

seen by the other patients or attendants. By this means, an asylum will be provided for those unhappy women, who might otherwise be compelled to commit actions repugnant to every principle of humanity.

EVERY patient, who shall be received, ought to be as near the full period of gestation as possible.

ALL the patients are to be retained in the house till their recovery be established. They are then to be dismissed, and to receive a sum not under five shillings, and exceeding it in proportion to the funds of the Hospital. Their children will also be baptized at the expence of the charity.

THE medicines necessary for the particular state of the lying-in women, will be furnished by the Professor of Midwifery.

Of the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors.

THE President, Vice-presidents, and Ordinary Directors, shall be chosen annually by the Subscribers.

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THE Extraordinary Directors shall consist of the following gentlemen :

The President of the Court of Session.

The Lord Chief Baron.

The Lord Provost.

The Lord Advocate.

The Conveener of the Trades.

The Acting Sheriff.

The Principal of the University.

The Professor of Divinity.

The President and Treasurer of the Royal College of Physicians.

The President and Treasurer of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Privileges of the Presidents and Ordinary Directors.

THE Presidents and Ordinary Directors shall establish such regulations for the management of the charity as shall appear necessary for its prosperity.

THEY shall elect all the office-bearers of the Hospital, except the ordinary physician, and consulting physicians and surgeon.

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THE President, Vice-Presidents, and Ordinary Directors, shall meet every three months, to receive from the treasurer and physician an account of the state of the funds and patients, and to regulate the management of the charity.

THE President, or one Vice-President and four Ordinary Directors, shall constitute a quorum, possessing the full powers of the whole.

Privileges of the Extraordinary Directors.

THE Extraordinary Directors shall be requested to attend a meeting of the Ordinary Directors, once a-year, that they may receive a satisfactory statement of the situation of the Hospital; and they shall also be summoned to attend meetings on extraordinary occasions, for the purpose of assisting the Ordinary Managers with their advice.

Med. Hist.

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